(a) whether it is a fact that the Sri Lankan Navy is regularly attacking the fishermen of Tamil Nadu and also arresting them for no reasons;

(b) the total number of persons taken into custody so far during this year;

(c) the numbers that have been killed by them so far during this year; and

(d) the steps that are being taken by our Government to protect and get them released from Sri Lanka?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) There have been incidents of apprehension and firing upon Indian fishermen allegedly by the Sri Lankan Navy. The Sri Lankan Navy has denied responsibility in incidents of firing on Indian fishermen.

(b) According to available information, in the period between 1st January to 5th December, 2008, one thousand four hundred and fifty two (1452) fishermen have been apprehended by the Sri Lankan Navy. All the fishermen have been released from custody and repatriated after intervention of the Government of India.

(c) According to media reports, in the period between 1st January to 5th December 2008, five Indian fishermen have allegedly been killed by the Sri Lankan Navy. The Sri Lankan Navy has denied responsibility after investigating the incidents.

(d) The Government always take up strongly all such incidents with the Government of Sri Lanka and emphasize the need for the Sri Lankan Navy to act with restraint, desist from firing on our fishermen and treat them in a humane manner. Keeping in mind the humanitarian and livelihood dimensions of the issue, Government has reached an understanding with the Sri Lankan Government on 26th October 2008 to put in place practical arrangements to deal with bonafide Indian and Sri Lankan fishermen crossing the International Maritime Boundary Line. As part of these arrangements, there will be no firing on Indian fishing vessels and Indian fishing vessels will not tread into sensitive areas designated by the Government of Sri Lanka along its coastline.

End of monarchy in Nepal

1153. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Constituent Assembly of Nepal has abolished monarchy there;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether exciting treaties with previous Government have undergone any changes;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether new treaties have been entered into; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Nepal's newly-elected Constituent Assembly declared Nepal a Federal Democratic Republic at its first sitting on May 28, 2008.

(c) and (e) No, Sir.

(d) and (f) Does not arise.

Indians working in Afghanistan

1154. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India is running out of options in Afghanistan;

(b) if so, whether a number of persons employed and working in Afghanistan's development of road, etc. were kidnapped and killed by the extremists;

(c) if so, the total number of Indians working in Afghanistan that have been attacked so far;

(d) the action India and Afghanistan have taken to safeguard the Indian working there on these projects; and

(e) whether these attacks have hampered the progress of development of Afghanistan?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) There have been 12 Indian fatal casualties resulting from terrorist attacks since November 2005.

(d) The security of Indians working in various development projects in Afghanistan is kept under constant scrutiny with the Government of Afghanistan and whenever required additional measures are taken through upgradation of levels of security.

(e) A continued deterioration in security situation may adversely impact the smooth and timely implementation of development project in which Indian professionals are engaged in Afghanistan.

G-8 Summit in Tokyo

†1155. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister of India attended the G-8 summit, held in Tokyo, Japan on 1st July, 2008;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.